

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07 LAB-04  
NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02  
HEW-06 IO-13 TRSE-00 /072 W  
-----030248Z 025469 /70

R 021823Z FEB 77  
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0227

UNCLAS LONDON 01914

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, UK  
SUBJECT: THE MINERS' SETTLEMENT

REF: LONDON 0620

1. AS EXPECTED, THE NATIONAL UNION OF MINERS RATIFIED THE DECISION OF ITS EXECUTIVE (REFTEL) TO ACCEPT A COMPROMISE EARLY RETIREMENT SCHEME WHICH WOULD ALLOW MINERS WITH 20 YEARS' EXPERIENCE UNDERGROUND TO RETIRE AT 62 STARTING AUGUST 1, IF THE NEW PHASE OF THE PAY POLICY ALLOWS IT, AND PHASING DOWN TO 60 BY 1979. THE VOTE WAS COMFORTABLE ENOUGH (55 PERCENT IN FAVOR VERSUS 45 PERCENT AGAINST) BUT THE COMPROMISE DID NOT DRAW THE "OVERWHELMING SUPPORT" WHICH NATIONAL UNION OF MINERS' LAWRENCE DALY HAD EARLIER SUGGESTED TO US WOULD BE THE CASE.

2. THE REASON FOR THE RELATIVELY HIGHER NEGATIVE VOTE THAN EXPECTED IS PROBABLY THE FACT THAT SURFACE WORKERS HAVE BEEN EXCLUDED FROM THE AGREEMENT SO FAR. SOME AREAS OF THE NATIONAL UNION OF MINERS, ESPECIALLY THE LEFT-WING LED GROUPS IN SCOTLAND AND YORKSHIRE, HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THEY WILL CONTINUE THE CAMPAIGN TO EXTEND THE EARLY RETIREMENT PLAN TO SURFACE MINERS. ANOTHER UNION IN THE MINING INDUSTRY, WHICH ORGANIZES FOREMEN, HAS IN FACT  
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THREATENED INDUSTRIAL ACTION BECAUSE ITS MEMBERS WERE NOT INCLUDED. LAWRENCE DALY, THE NUM GENERAL SECRETARY, WHILE EXPRESSING SATISFACTION WITH THE VOTE, HAS INDICATED TO US THAT THE MINERS WILL CONTINUE EFFORTS TO EXTEND THE SYSTEM TO SURFACE WORKERS, BUT MAKE IT CLEAR THAT FOR THE PRESENT THIS IS NOT EXPECTED TO BE A CONFRONTATIONAL ISSUE.

3. THE SETTLEMENT CERTAINLY AVOIDS A SERIOUS CHALLENGE TO THE GOVERNMENT BUT IT WILL NONETHELESS COMPLICATE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE TUC OVER THE NEXT ANNUAL PAY POLICY. IF, AS IS LIKELY, THE MINERS' EARLY RETIREMENT WILL BE INTEGRATED INTO THE NEXT PAY POLICY, WILL OTHER WORKERS IN HAZARDOUS, DIRTY OCCUPATIONS SUCH AS STEEL WORKERS BE INCLUDED? THERE IS SOME SUGGESTION THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS WORKING ON A FORMULA TO INCLUDE A LIMITED CATEGORY OF WORKERS IN ADDITION TO THE MINERS WHO COULD BE FREE TO NEGOTIATE SIMILAR EARLY RETIREMENT SCHEMES.

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
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**Subject:** THE MINERS' SETTLEMENT  
**TAGS:** ELAB, PINT, UK  
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